

VZCZCXRO3230
OO RUEHGI RUEHMA RUEHROV
DE RUEHKH #1506/01 2841153
ZNR UUUUU ZZH
O 101153Z OCT 08
FM AMEMBASSY KHARTOUM
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 2047
INFO RUCNFUR/DARFUR COLLECTIVE
RUCNIAD/IGAD COLLECTIVE
RHMFISS/CJTJF HOA

UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 02 KHARTOUM 001506

DEPT FOR AF A/S FRAZER, SE WILLIAMSON, AF/SPG
NSC FOR PITTMAN AND HUDSON
ADDIS ABABA FOR USAU
DEPT PLS PASS USAID FOR AFR/SUDAN

SENSITIVE
SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [ASEC](#) [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [KPKO](#) [SOCI](#) [AU](#) [UNSC](#) [SU](#)

SUBJECT: SOUTH DARFUR MINISTER RECOUNTS AMBUSH ATTEMPT; EXPRESSES
DOUBT UNAMID CONTRACT HELICOPTER WAS SHOT DOWN

REF: A) KHARTOUM 1487
B) KHARTOUM 1445
C) KHARTOUM 1483

¶1. (SBU) SUMMARY: On October 7, Omer Abdel Rahman Adam recounted details of the September 30 attack on his vehicle that resulted in the death of his bodyguard. Although reluctant to directly accuse any particular individual or agency, Adam asserted that the attack was a targeted assassination attempt and suggested that elements within the Central Sudanese government want him dead. The SPLM will continue to freeze its participation in the Darfur state governments as long as incidents such as this continue, stated Adam. END SUMMARY.

¶2. (SBU) Adam first spoke of the attack on September 30, repeating many of the same details from early conversations (see reftel A). Adam added that there are over 20 checkpoints along the Nyala to Kass road operated by many, different GoS forces. Having passed the first and second checkpoints, Adam was stopped at the third by another force. He was forced to return to the first checkpoint where he provided his name, job, and reason for travel and received written authorization. This permit allowed him to proceed past the third checkpoint and on to the checkpoint (around the 15th) where the actual attack occurred. Adam stated that he believes that this strange back and forth between the first and third checkpoints may be related to preparations for the attack. He also claimed that Sudanese intelligence confiscated the phones and paperwork for employees of all checkpoints to investigate (and possibly cover-up) the incident.

¶3. (SBU) Although not initially willing to directly accuse any individual or specific agency, Adam hinted that high-ranking officials in El-Fasher and Khartoum are responsible for the attack. Adam stated that some members of the NCP ("who want change, but are afraid to go against their party") have provided him with sensitive information relating to the assassination attempt and other events such as the August 25 attack on Kalma camp. "I am making a lot of noise for the regime about what is going in Darfur, and something like this would have to be directed by someone senior in Khartoum," said Adam.

COMMUNITY SUPPORT, BUT FEAR LINGERS

¶4. (SBU) Adam stated that he has received great support following the attack, but that he still fears for his life. Adam said that upon returning to Nyala after the incident, more than 15,000 people visited his home. Adam added that since the attack and his withdrawal from the government, individuals inside and outside of Sudan have offered to pay his salary if the South Darfur state government cuts off payments, as it has threatened. Despite this support, Adam stated that he still fears for his life and inquired whether the U.S. might be able to provide any type of protection in

South Darfur. Adam noted that the SPLM would provide this service for him, but due to restrictions in the CPA on the location of its security personnel, the SPLA is unable to send any more SPLA forces to Darfur. Adam asserted that "they will not stop at an attack on my vehicle, they will even go so far as to shoot down the next airplane I am on."

SPLM'S WITHDRAWAL FROM STATE GOVERNMENTS CONTINUES

15. (SBU) Adam stated that the SPLM withdrawal of its 18 officials in the three Darfur state governments continues. Adam noted that SPLM leadership, such as GoSS President Salva Kiir, are very concerned about these reoccurring security incidents in Darfur. Adam also stated that senior SPLM leadership are questioning whether elections can be held in 2009 while insecurity pervades Darfur. "We in the SPLM cannot accept elections if there is such violence in Darfur. This is just not my personal view but that of Yassir, Pagan, and others," stated Adam. Adam emphasized that he views this assassination attempt as just one example of how the GoS continues to use violence, deceit, and force to maintain control of the region. In order for the SPLM ministers to return to their positions, there must be movement towards a fundamental change in Darfur, and "not just the removal of one figure such as the governor of South Darfur."

HELICOPTER CRASH NEAR KALMA CAMP

16. (SBU) Adam asserted that Kalma's IDPs did not fire any weapons at the UNAMID contracted helicopter that crashed outside of Kalma camp on September 29, killing four contracted employees (reftel C). With GoS troops posted near the camp and a continuous UNAMID police force inside, there would have been immediate reports about IDP

KHARTOUM 00001506 002 OF 002

firing at the helicopter, if this had, in fact, happened, said Adam. Elements within the GoS will misrepresent events in Darfur for its own benefit, and therefore caution and independent verification of any event is needed, noted Adam.

17. (SBU) (NOTE: Two employees of the helicopter contractor, Badr Airlines, were reluctant to discuss the incident with poloffs "as we should not be releasing information with an investigation ongoing." One employee who visited the crash scene did note, however, that Civil Aviation investigators did recover one of two flight recorders. According to this source, UNAMID representatives were also at the crash scene. The other Badr representative, Ahmed Osman, asserted that the helicopter was shot by a rocket propelled grenade (RPG), but stated that he had received this information from the Sudanese Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Neither of these Badr contacts was able to independently verify that the helicopter had in fact been shot down.

18. (SBU) Note continued: As of October 9, three different versions of the helicopter crash are still circulating. GoS sources allege that Kalma IDPs fired weapons at the helicopter. SLA/AW sources assert that no shots were fired, and the helicopter experienced a mechanical failure, which has now been exploited by the GoS. London-based SLA/Unity spokesman Mahjoub Hussein also boldly asserted that GoS forces fired on the helicopter to justify future raids on Kalma camp. COMMENT: Given the troubled and controversial history of Kalma, even after the release of the CAA's investigation, there may never be widespread acceptance of its results. END NOTE AND COMMENT.)

19. (SBU) COMMENT: This is the first time we have seen Adam since the assassination attempt against him. He clearly attempted to downplay the personal dimension of the attack, and framed it instead as part of the GoS's ongoing oppression of the people of Darfur and the South. Nonetheless, Adam was noticeably shaken, unusually irritable, and uncertain about the immediate plans of SPLM in Darfur.

ASQUINO